

Putting policy into context

“At one end of the scale, producers may want to maximise biodiversity, while at the other end, they may want to maximise livestock productivity.

“Many producers want a balance between these two extremes.”

Making the most of it

Assuming native pastures are currently in sound condition, Josh offered the following suggestions:

To maximise biodiversity: choose paddocks with high structural diversity (trees, shrubs, tussock grasses, fallen timber, rocks) and with little or no fertiliser history; apply little or no fertiliser to maintain Colwell P at <10mg/kg; and maintain low grazing pressure (<4 DSE/ha)

To maximise productivity: choose paddocks with deeper, better structured soils with a strong fertiliser history and dominated by the more productive native grasses (for example *Microlaena* and *Danthonia*); apply fertiliser to maintain Colwell P at roughly 20 mg/kg; maintain high grazing pressure (up to 12 DSE/ha in good seasons).

To achieve more balance between biodiversity and productivity, paddock selection, fertiliser histories, fertiliser application rates and grazing pressures can range between the two examples above. ↘

More information

Josh Dorrrough, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems

T: (02) 6494 2744

E: josh.dorrrough@csiro.au

Policy is implemented in a social context. And the context counts. A UWA PhD student, Helena Clayton's thesis, *An investigation of farmer responses to economic incentives for landscape recovery*, investigates the ways in which this social context affects how receptive people are to policy – and how these lessons can be mapped onto the process of policy choice, development and design.



Studying at the UWA School of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Helena is investigating the role of environmental markets in addressing Australia's natural resource management issues for her thesis. Her PhD explores theoretical insights into behavioural economics, to better understand how farming communities might respond to the market-based policies that support their environmental recovery efforts through the provision of economic incentives.

“It provides focus on the social dimensions of market-based environmental policy, providing recommendations for socially appropriate policy design – and choice – for farming communities engaged in efforts to achieve biodiversity conservation and salinity mitigation,” Helena said.

“I draw upon ‘crowding-out theory’ to investigate the interactions between socially-based motivations and economic incentives. To better help me understand these reactions, I am using the *Auction for Landscape Recovery* (ALR) as a case study. The ALR trials an auction mechanism that provides economic incentives designed to sway farmers towards undertaking on-farm projects to achieve specific environmental outcomes.” The auction is funded through the *National Action Plan for Salinity* and is managed by WWF Australia. ↘

More information

Helena Clayton, DEC

T: (08) 6488 4633

E: clayth01@student.uwa.edu.au